

some legislation. Yet fewer than ten lesbian executions are known, and some of these are doubtful, since other crimes were involved.

The Reformation and After. It might be thought that the age of Reformation would have brought some relief in this grim onslaught of lawmaking—if only because a deeply divided society was preoccupied with other problems. But not so, for the death penalty stipulated by article 116 of the Caroline Code of 1532, extending the provision of the Bambergensis of 1507 throughout the Holy Roman Empire, provided a baneful model, followed almost immediately by Henry VIII's law of 1533, of paramount importance for English-speaking, common law countries. This Tudor legislation anchored the prohibition of sodomy firmly in the fabric of the secular law as a felony, taking it out of the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts which were believed to have become lax.

While some Enlightenment thinkers, notably the great penal reformer Cesare Beccaria (1738–1794), had been critical, credit for the first real break in the dismal pattern belongs to one of the emerging United States. After several earlier reform attempts, in 1786 Pennsylvania substituted hard labor for death, to be followed by Austria in 1787 and Prussia in 1794. Just as antihomosexual legislation had crossed ideological lines in the 1530s, the mitigations were the product of two very different climates: the Quaker tradition (transatlantically) and enlightened despotism (in Europe).

Decriminalization. In the wake of the French Revolution, the French National Assembly swept away the whole repressive apparatus of the ancien régime when it adopted a new criminal code in 1791. Then in 1810, the French Code Penal (as part of the Code Napoléon) eliminated homosexual conduct entirely from the penal law, a salutary step that has been followed in many countries since.

In Hitler's holocaust male homosexuals died in the concentration camps,

though they were rarely officially condemned to death. In the 1970s, the Ayatollah Khomeini's Iran instituted execution for homosexuals (on spurious precedents derived from Islam). Such fanatical acts have been universally condemned by enlightened opinion.

See also Canon Law; Law, Feudal and Royal; Law, Germanic; Law, Municipal; Sixteenth-Century Legislation.

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CAPOTE, TRUMAN (1924–1984)

American novelist and journalist. Capote became famous at the age of 24 with his elegant, evocative book *Other Voices, Other Rooms*, which concerns the growing consciousness of a boy seeking to comprehend the ambivalent inhabitants of a remote Mississippi house. Dubbed "swamp baroque," this short novel was easily assimilated into then-current notions of Southern decadence. Born in New Orleans, Capote lived most of his life in New York and at the homes of his jetset friends in Europe. He cherished a lifelong friendship with fellow writer Jack Dunphy. In 1966 he published *In Cold Blood*, a "nonfiction novel" about the seemingly senseless murder of a Kansas farm family by two drifters. In preparing for the book, Capote gained the confidence of the murderers, and was thus able to make vivid their sleazy mental universe.

The controversy surrounding this book elevated him to celebrity status, and he began a series of appearances on television talk shows, where his waspish wit amused, but where he often served the function (rivaled only by Liberace) of reinforcing for a mass audience their stereotype of a homosexual. During this period Capote became the confidant of rich and famous people, especially women, and he gathered their stories for incorporation in a major work which was intended to rival Marcel Proust. Yet when excerpts from this work-in-progress were published in

magazines, not only were they found to be vulgar and lacking in insight, but Capote began to be dropped by the socialites he had so unsubtly satirized. Dismayed, the writer sank more and more into a miasma of alcohol, cocaine, and valium—his only consolation the devoted love, or so he claimed, of a succession of straight, proletarian young men whom he prized because of their very ordinariness. When a fragment, apparently all that has survived, of the magnum opus appeared posthumously as *Answered Prayers* in 1986, it had little more than gossip value. In retrospect Capote was not alone among American writers in being destroyed by his addictions. He will nonetheless be remembered for his earlier work, which remains to document the style of an era.

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CARAVAGGIO, MICHELANGELO MERISI DA (1571–1610)

Italian painter. Trained in Northern Italy, Caravaggio went to Rome as a young man where his meteoric career transformed the then-somnolent art scene and left a permanent impression on European art. Caravaggio came under the protection of Cardinal Francesco Maria del Monte, a homosexual prelate. During this period he painted several works showing ambiguous or androgynous young men, including *The Musicians* (New York, Metropolitan Museum). Efforts have been made to deny the homoerotic implications of these works, but they seem feeble. Modern heterosexual art historians have claimed that because of Caravaggio's relations with women he cannot have had a homosexual side—which not only denies Kinsey but what we know of dominant bisexual patterns in the era in which the artist lived.

His mature career began with a painting of *St. Matthew and the Angel* for the church of San Luigi dei Francesi in

Rome, which was rejected because the figure of the saint was considered too plebeian. Although the artist produced a second, toned-down version, he continued to exploit a vein of dramatic realism that gave his work a direct impact not seen in art before, and rarely since.

Caravaggio had an adventurous, often violent life. His hot temper several times got him in trouble with the police, and in 1603 a rival artist sued him for libel. His career in Rome was terminated in 1606 when, during a game of racquets, he quarreled with a man and killed him. He fled to Naples and then Malta, where he assaulted a member of the Order. He died of fever in port near Rome, where he had hoped to obtain a pardon.

For a long time, especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Caravaggio's reputation was in eclipse; he was considered a mere "tenebrist" who excelled only in painting shadows. He did not fit any of the accepted categories. Only after World War II did his reputation begin to climb, attaining remarkable heights in the 1980s, when even the abstract artist Frank Stella praised him. In 1986 Derek Jarman's stylish film *Caravaggio* was released, presenting the artist as bisexual, but emphasizing the homosexual side.

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CARNIVAL

See *Mardi Gras and Masked Balls*.

✓ CARPENTER, EDWARD (1844–1929)

English writer, mystical thinker, and utopian socialist. Educated for the clergy at Cambridge University, Carpenter resigned from the Church of England in 1873 and taught for a time in the university extension movement in northern